the working of their own overthrow and reproach, and a secret joy in one to be deceived by another."*

There are two ways by which the mind, in its voluntary action, contrives to deceive the conscience.

First. It contrives to banish, as much as possible, the remembrance of the sinful acts committed. When men go to sleep, they darken their windows: and when the guilty wish to be undisturbed, they shut out all consideration of the evil they have done. The polluting lusts that were fondled, so long as they could communicate pleasure, are now banished out of sight when they have served their purpose: as the embalmers in ancient Egypt—sent for, in the first instance, with avidity—had to flee as fast as they could after their offensive work was completed. The malignant passions, after being gratified, must creep out of sight, as hired assassins are got rid of after they have done the deed.

Secondly, the mind learns to present the deeds which it wishes to do or to avoid in a false light. Certain features are brought out into prominent relief, and others are as studiously hid from the view. Hence we find multitudes rushing eagerly to what is evil, but carefully keeping the more painful part out of sight, as the priests in Mexico rung the gong to drown the cries of the human victims offered in sacrifice.

From these two, and it may be from other causes, we find the conscience operating in a number of perverted ways in the human breast.

FIRST, THERE IS AN UNENLIGHTENED CONSCIENCE. The mind makes no inquiry into the objects presented to it: but taking them as they come, the conscience decides upon them as they cast up. Persons under this influence act according to the prevailing views of their age and country, without making any nice inquiry into their accuracy. They follow religiously the superstitions of their country: they practise faithfully the virtues of their family or tribe—be they

hospitality, or courage, or whatever else: and they allow themselves to fall into the vices that abound around them—it may be intemperance or revenge—and they scarcely feel any compunctions in consequence. It is the least sinful form which the conscience takes in fallen man. Yet it is not without sin. The mind avoids inquiry, because it

* Bishop Reynolds on the Affections.